



Fayette and Westmoreland Public Zone Segmentation

As of 1:00 P.M. EST on November 15, 2010, WFO Pittsburgh, PA officially segmented Fayette and Westmoreland counties to create two new zones. The establishment of the Westmoreland Ridges (PAZ074) and Fayette Ridges (PAZ076) zones will provide more localized forecast and warning services for these locations. The new zones represent the area in each county along and east of Chestnut Ridge.

Why the change?

The county warning area of WFO Pittsburgh features a dynamic range in terrain which allows for localized weather effects. This presents a series of challenges to forecasters when considering the impacts of lake effect snow, upsloping enhancement, and elevation-driven temperature and wind variations. These impacts are most evident from the late-Fall through the early-Spring. Whether the area is impacted with snowfall, rainfall, freezing rain/drizzle, wind chill, or gradient wind, it has been a challenge in the past for forecasters to accurately delineate the weather-related hazards that develop along and east of Chestnut Ridge. With the creation of the two new zones, our improved understanding of local climatology and localized effects will now be explicitly expressed when preparing forecasts, watches, and warnings for these mountainous areas.

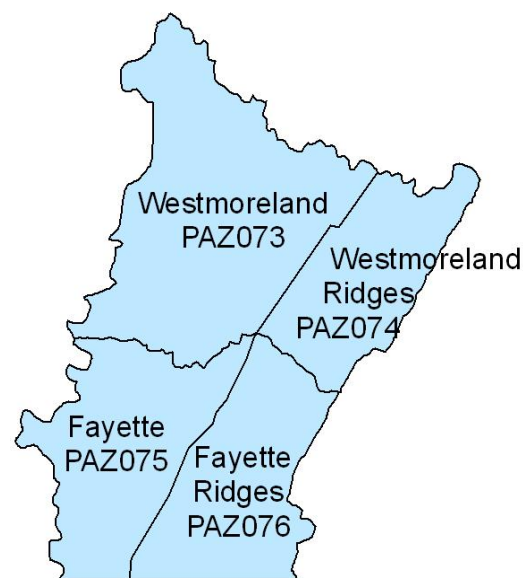


Figure 1- New zone names and numbers

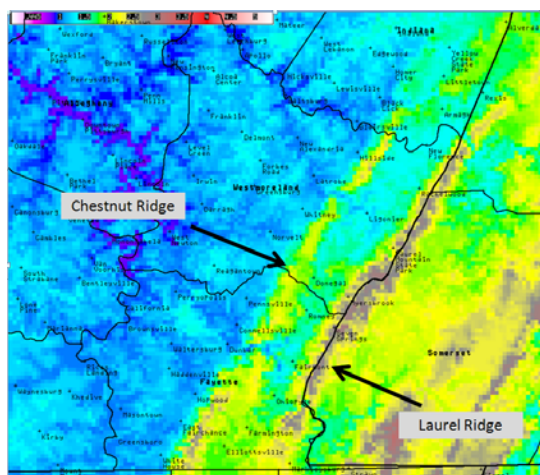


Figure 2- Topography map highlighting the higher terrain of Chestnut Ridge and Laurel Ridge

How were county segments determined?

Within both Fayette and Westmoreland counties there is a natural dividing line oriented from southwest to northeast along Chestnut Ridge. Meanwhile, the Laurel Ridge extends from extreme southeastern Fayette County northeastward along the eastern border of both counties. Chestnut Ridge not only serves as a geographical division of the counties, but also as a dividing line between the more densely populated western portions of the counties and the sparsely populated areas to the east. The dividing line in Westmoreland County runs approximately east of a line from Derry to Latrobe

to Scottdale. In Fayette County the dividing line runs roughly east of a line from Bear Rocks to Connellsville to Hopwood to Springhill.

How will the change benefit our users?

1. Significant improvement in custom service through more specific and detailed forecast and warning products.
2. Reduction of the false alarm area covered by long-fused warnings, especially during winter weather situations.
3. Better service for the high population areas in the west and tourist destinations in the east.
4. Better incorporation of climate and terrain into zone-based forecasts and warnings.
5. More forecast detail for snowfall amounts, temperatures, wind, wind chill, and precipitation type.

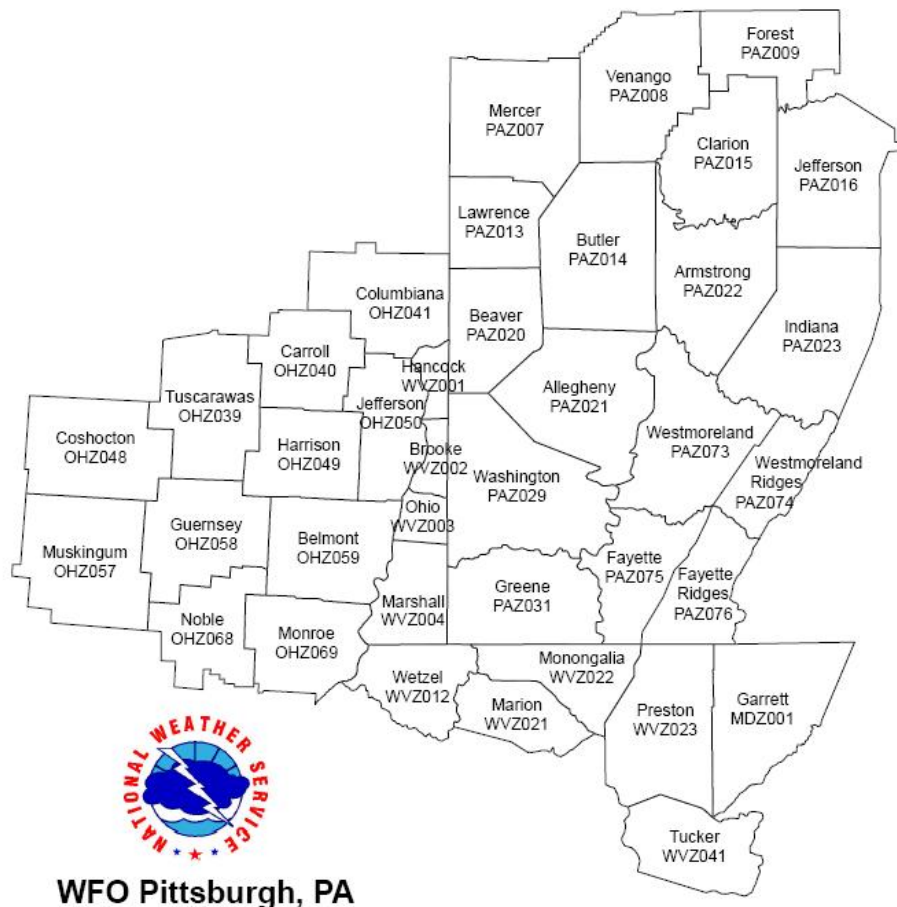


Figure 3- The new county zone configuration for WFO Pittsburgh, PA

For more information see our [Public Information Statement](#)

Any more questions? Please contact:

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